WILLITON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

SOMERSET.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1944.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health.

To The Chairman and Members of the Williton Rural District Council,

Gentlemen,

It is my privilege to present to you my Annual Report upon the Health and Sanitation of your District for the year 1944.

The District extends over an area of 97,000 acres and for about 32 miles along the shores of the Bristol Channel.

The population of the District is estimated at 12,560, and the estimated number of inhabited houses is 3,626.

The Rateable Value is £64,310, and the sum of £272.18.11. is represented by one penny rate.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The Registrar General's Return shows 201 births of which 98 were males and 103 females.
The birth rate is therefore 16.00 per 1000.

The Registrar General's Return of deaths shows 195, (110 males and 85 females), and this gives a death rate of 15.52 per 1000
The number of deaths of Infants under one year were 7, which gives an Infant Mortality of 34.82.
There were no deaths from Measles, Scarlet Fever or Diphtheria.

HEALTH SERVICES.

There is an Isolation Hospital, known as the Minehead and Williton Hospital, where cases of Infectious Diseases, (other than Small Pox) which cannot be satisfactorily isolated at home are sent.
There is a Steam Disinfector where all bedding and clothing can be disinfected, and a motor ambulance provided, in which infectious cases can be removed from their homes to the Hospital.
The County Authorities have a Small Pox Hospital at Polden Hills to which any case occurring in the District can go.
The County have a Tuberculosis Dispensary at Minehead at which Dr. Short, the County Tuberculosis Officer, or Dr. Martyn, the Assistant Tuberculosis Officer, attends every Thursday, and to which all residents in the District can go for examination.
A Lady Health Visitor visits every known case and reports upon it.
Care Committees have been formed in the District, who, when necessary, provide extra nourishment in needy cases.
In needful cases a shelter is provided on the recommendation of the County Tuberculosis Officer.
There is no Institution in the District which provides for unmarried Mothers, Illegitimate Children or Homeless Children, other than the Public Assistance Institution.

Infectious Diseases.	Number of Cases Notified.
Small-Pox.	
Scarlet Fever.	17
Diphtheria.	
Enteric Fever.	
Puerperal Fever.	
Pneumonia.	
Encephalitis Lethargica.	
Acute Poliomyelitis.	
Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	
Puerperal Pyrexia.	1
Puerperal Sepsis.	
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis.	
Erysipelas.	4
Measles.	79
Whooping Cough	59
Chicken-Pox.	3
Total...	163

Diphtheria.

A supply of Diphtheria Anti-Toxin is kept by the M.O.H., and can be supplied at any time when required, and in doubtful cases, swabs are sent to the County Laboratory for examination.

Puerperal Fever, Puerperal Pyrexia, Puerperal Sepsis and Ophthalmia Neonatorum.

Arrangements regarding Puerperal cases are made by the County Authorities as follows:-

Hospital.	Class of Cases Admitted.
Bristol Royal Infirmary.	O.N. P.F. & P.P.
Bridgwater Hospital.	O.N. P.F. & P.P.
Wells & District Cottage Hospital.	O.N. P.F. & P.P.
Yeovil & District Hospital.	O.N. P.F. & P.P.
Taunton Isolation Hospital.	O.N.
Chard & District Hospital.	P.F. & P.P.

Nurses.

Application is made by the Doctor in charge of the case direct to the County Medical Officer of Health for a nurse for Ophthalmia Neonatorum cases.

For cases of Puerperal Fever and Puerperal Pyrexia, usually the nurse associated with the case is retained, but in special cases a fully trained nurse in addition is sent , if application is made direct to the County Medical Officer of Health explaining the special necessity.

TUBERCULOSIS.

48 Cases were notified - 42 Respiratory, 6 Non-Respiratory.

There were 5 deaths - 5 respiratory and 0 Non-Respiratory.

Water Supply.

Private enterprise is chiefly responsible for pipe borne water in most of the villages of the District, the District Council being responsible for comparatively few.

For instance, there are private water supplies in 16 villages, in 11 villages the supply belongs to the District Council, leaving 7 without a piped water supply.

By an arrangement with the County Authorities, the Public and Private Water Supplies are periodically examined, by this means a defective supply can soon be discovered.

Most of the 7 villages without a piped water supply are scattered and the inhabitants depend upon isolated springs and wells.

There is not much cause for comment for the water supply of the District as a whole. During the year steps have been taken to improve the water supply for the Parish of Cutcombe which comprises the hamlets of Cutcombe, Wheddon Cross and Luckwell Bridge. The intention being to collect water from springs at White Moor, (subject to satisfactory gauging) convey same to the existing reservoirs and supply the area by gravitation.

At Monksilver the Private Water Supply failed during the year and an Emergency Supply had to be laid on to keep the villagers going. Mr. Marwood Notley, a local landowner, very kindly consented to allow the overflow from his private supply to be used and this was laid on by the Council to the village.

A scheme to supply Monksilver and the surrounding district has been adopted by the Council which, if carried out, will supply not only the village mentioned and 5 other groups of houses but will be a reserve from which Williton and Roadwater supplies can be increased.

The supply to the village of Timberscombe began to get low during the Summer but thanks to the kindness of Mr. E.W.Towler of Stowey Farm Timberscombe extra springs were quickly placed at the disposal of the Council and an abundant supply was provided.

Drainage and Sewerage.

Most of the larger villages have a system of piped sewers which are kept in good working order. The villages of Roadwater, Bossington and Holford are however still unsewered.

A scheme has been prepared to provide a system of sewers for the whole of the Parish of Selworthy, which will include Allerford and Bossington and the same is now before the Ministry of Health for their approval.

A local inquiry by the Ministry of Health has been held, but the outbreak of War caused the Government to with-hold their consent.

The Council are considering the advisability of dealing with the sewerage of Stogursey and providing a satisfactory outfall.

Closet Accommodation.

There are no closely built or populous centres in the District, where closets on the conservancy system remain in any great quantity. There are still, however, scattered Privies and Earth Closets in the District, and these are to be found in every Parish.

Scavenging.

The collection of house refuse in the District was dealt with by the Council in a very thorough manner, and ~~particularly~~ practically the whole of the Rural Area had its refuse collected but as a War economy measure the area of collection has been slightly curtailed, and the intervals between collections increased. As soon as the War is over and normal times return it is intended to review the whole question of collection.

Dumps are provided as follows:-

1. At Bossington with a forced draught Incinerator to serve Porlock Luccombe, Selworthy, Wootton Courtney and Minehead Without.
2. At Dunster with a forced draught Incinerator to serve Dunster Timberscombe, Cutcombe, Carhampton, Withycombe and half the Parish of Old Cleeve.
3. At Woolston to serve Williton, Treborough, Luxborough, half the Parish of Old Cleeve, Nettlecombe, Elworthy, Brompton Ralph, Monksilver, Clatworthy, Stogumber, Bicknoller and Sampford Brett.
4. at Stringston to serve Stringston, Dodington, Stogursey, West and East

Quantoxhead, Kilve, Holford and Kilton.

The collections are made monthly for Porlock, Williton and Dunster and quarterly elsewhere.

The whole of the collections are made by means of a modern covered Dustless Motor Vehicle and there is no waste or unsightliness during transit.

SUMMARY OF WORKS DONE BY THE SANITARY INSPECTORS.

Inspections ...	473
Re-inspections ..	523
Total	996

Houses re-drained	21	Premises Disinfected.....	29
New W.C.s provided.....	20	Milk Samples for examination.....	56
Premises Limed & Cleansed	29	Water Samples for Analysis.....	40
Cow sheds reconditioned..	17		

SCHOOLS.

The Sanitary condition and water supply to the Public Elementary Schools are on the whole good.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

The Sanitary Staff consists of Mr. R.E.Jackman, Inspector of Nuisances and Sanitary Surveyor, a whole time officer, who holds the Certificate of the Sanitary Institute as a Qualified Inspector, and is a Member of the Municipal and County Engineers, also a Fellow of the Incorporated Association of Surveyors.

The additional Sanitary Inspector, Mr. R.B.Perrett, M.S.I.A., who is also a Certified Inspector of Meat and Foods, has joined H.M.Forces.

The following adoptive Acts are in force in the District:-

Public Health Acts Amendment Acts 1890.
Infectious Diseases Prevention Act 1890

HOUSING.

14 cottages have been reconditioned during the year. The Council's Long Term Housing programme consists of 200 houses.
First year .....34 houses.
Second year .....62 houses.
Sites for first year are assured and sites for second year are being selected.

(Sgd) C.F.R.KILLICK.
M.B. Ch.B.
Medical Officer of Health to
the Williton Rural District Council,
Somerset.